

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, 9 and 11-18 are amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Vy at the interview held March 15, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicant's record of the interview. During the interview, the Examiner suggested further clarifying the claim language in order to better distinguish the claims from the applied references. The Amendment revises claims 1, 3, 4, 9 and 11-18 consistent with the Examiner's suggestions.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,747,605 to Lebaric et al. (Lebaric). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, that a ground pattern is planar. This feature is shown in Fig. 1B, for example. The Examiner indicated during the interview that Lebaric does not teach or suggest this feature. Accordingly, claim 1 is not anticipated by Lebaric.

Claims 2-8 and 10 are allowable at least for their dependence on claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 9, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lebaric in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,816,835 to Abiko et al. (Abiko). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Abiko does not overcome the deficiencies of Lebaric with respect to claim 1. As such, claims 9, 11 and 12 are allowable at least for their dependence on an allowable base claim, as well as for the additional features they recite.

The Office Action rejects claims 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lebaric in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,707,427 to Konishi et al. (Konishi). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 13 recites features similar to those of claim 1. As discussed above, Lebaric does not teach or suggest these features. Konishi does not overcome the deficiencies. Thus, even combined, Lebaric and Konishi do not teach or suggest every feature of claim 13. At least for these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is patentably distinct from the applied art.

Claim 14 is allowable at least for its dependence on allowable claim 13, as well as for the additional feature it recites.

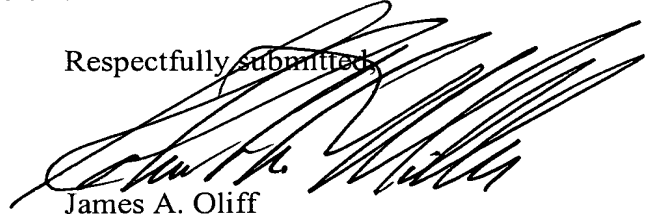
Claim 15 recites features similar to those of claim 1. As discussed above, Lebaric does not teach or suggest this combination of features. Konishi does not overcome the deficiency of Lebaric. Thus, even combined, Lebaric and Konishi do not teach or suggest every feature of claim 15. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 15 is patentably distinct from the applied art.

Claims 16-18 are allowable at least for their dependence on allowable base claims, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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